



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/818,719	03/27/2001	Rangachari Anand	YOR920000177USI	1335

7590 02/02/2005

Robert P. Tassinari, Jr.
Intellectual Property Law Dept.
IBM Corporation
P.O. Box 218
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

EXAMINER

GART, MATTHEW S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3625

DATE MAILED: 02/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/818,719

Applicant(s)

ANAND ET AL.

Examiner

Matthew s Gart

Art Unit

3625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 September 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 March 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-13 are pending in the instant application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by DeFrancesco (Patent Application Publication US 2003/0101133 A1).

Referring to claim 1. DeFrancesco discloses a method for representing a business process within a computing system, comprising the steps of:

- Defining the business process using a state-machine based representation (paragraph 0110) where transitions of the state machine represent roles and actions (paragraph 0059), and states of the state machine represent stages in the business process where the commerce system is waiting for an event to occur (paragraph 0092);
- Identifying the actions that participants with particular roles can perform at particular stages of the business process by corresponding state in the

state machine and out-going transitions from that state (paragraph 0059 and paragraph 0092).

Referring to claim 2. DeFrancesco further comprising altering the business process by changing its state-machine based representation (paragraph 0022, "Accordingly, the present invention is directed toward a workflow management system for an automated credit application system that is flexible and can be easily customized according to individual requirements of financial institutions.").

Referring to claim 3. DeFrancesco further comprises a method wherein attributes of a state-machine based representation are tailored to a particular user (paragraph 0022).

Referring to claim 4. DeFrancesco further comprises a method wherein the state-machine based representation includes means for validating that actions taken by a user are allowed by the state machine description so as to ensure that the user has a role that can perform the requested action at that state (Fig. 5).

Referring to claim 5. DeFrancesco further discloses a method wherein the business processes and their state-machine based representations can be synchronized with other business processes by passing messages between state machines (paragraph 0043).

Referring to claim 6. DeFrancesco discloses a method for executing a business process represented as a state machine running on a computing system, where transitions of the state machine represent roles of participants in

the business process and actions that can be taken as part of the business process, and states of the state machine represent stages in the business process where the business process is waiting for an event to occur, the method comprising:

- Receiving from a user a command representing a desired action to be performed as part of the business process (paragraph 0059 and paragraph 0092);
- Checking the role of the user within the business process and a context in which the command occurs (paragraph 0059 and paragraph 0092);
- If the command is allowable by a user with the role within the context, executing the command (paragraph 0059 and paragraph 0092).

The Examiner notes, the "if" step is a conditional limitation and is given little patentable weight. Methods are composed of actions, when you perform the actions of a method and do not select one of the alternatives or "if" steps, you are not performing any action under those alternatives.

Referring to claim 7. DeFrancesco further discloses a method comprising the step of displaying to users a list of possible commands to be issued by the user as part of the business process (paragraph 0022).

Referring to claim 8. DeFrancesco further discloses a method where the displayed commands are selected for display based on the user's role within the business process, the context of the business process, and the state of the business process (paragraph 0022).

Referring to claim 9. DeFrancesco further discloses a method wherein different versions of a business process represented as different state machines share software for actions common in the different state machines, and share user interfaces by generating a means of user interaction based on the state machine descriptions (paragraph 0022).

Referring to claim 10. DeFrancesco further discloses a method where the execution of different instances of a particular business process are handled by storing a current state for each instance of the business process (paragraph 0023).

Referring to claim 11. Claim 11 is rejected under the same rationale as set forth above in claims 6-10.

Referring to claim 12. Claim 12 is rejected under the same rationale as set forth above in claims 1-5.

Referring to claim 13. Claim 13 is rejected under the same rationale as set forth above in claims 6-10.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to the prior art rejection of claims 1-13 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant's arguments with respect to the 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection of claims 12-13 is persuasive.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew s Gart whose telephone number is 703-305-5355. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30AM to 5:00PM m-f.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wynn Coggins can be reached on 703-308-1344. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



MSG
Patent Examiner
January 31, 2005